Education
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Promoting Success for Newcomer Students: A Message from the Minister

In the past few years, the number of students entering Manitoba schools as newcomers to Canada has dramatically increased. This diverse student population enriches our schools and our province with a wide variety of languages, cultures, experiences, and skills. Most of these students have good educational backgrounds, but in order to reach their potential and their goals for education, and to participate fully in Canadian society, they will need to learn English as an additional language (EAL). The term *EAL* recognizes the additive nature of language learning that honours the multilingual student population.

Language learning is hard work. Most EAL students require five to seven years to gain full proficiency in conversational and academic English. Learning the curriculum in a new language is an additional challenge. Since 2005, Manitoba Education has developed several initiatives for EAL learners, including enhanced EAL student support funding.

Manitoba Education recently released a new curriculum document called *K-12 English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Literacy, Academics, and Language (LAL): Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes*. It provides information and learning outcomes to guide specialized language instruction, intercultural learning, and EAL learning across the curriculum. It is available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/diversity/eal/framework/index.html>.

The Department is also working to meet EAL students' needs in many other ways, including Senior Years EAL curriculum development. As well, teachers across the curriculum have been offered professional learning opportunities related to working with students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Some newcomer students, particularly those from war-affected/refugee backgrounds, arrive with limited schooling. The Intensive Newcomer Support (INS) grant has stimulated innovative projects designed to provide specialized and intensive programming for regular classroom learning, while also supporting students' cultural orientation. Through the services provided by the INS grant, these students are more likely to stay in school and attain the foundational skills that will allow them to graduate with a Senior Years diploma. As a result, students will make a more successful transition to post-secondary education or the workplace.

Currently, nine school divisions run INS projects, serving approximately 160 students. Information about this grant is available at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/ins_grant/index.html>.

To further support these students, curricula are being developed to help with the accelerated literacy, academic foundations, and language that they need to transition into regular Senior Years programming. Relevant curricula are also being adapted to the Français program for immigrant students with French literacy and EAL needs. In addition, work has been done toward establishing pathways to adult language and education programs for older students who may not complete their graduation requirements in the usual time frame.

These general EAL and more intensive initiatives will support newcomer students and help ensure that they have opportunities for success in school and in their communities.

Nancy Allan
Minister of Education

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Senior Years Industrial Arts: Exploring Vocations

By Ken Nimchuk

Industrial arts education gives students practical skills and knowledge that they can apply to many other areas of life. It gives them opportunities to develop lifelong learning patterns for living and working effectively in our changing technological world.

The curriculum document *Senior Years Industrial Arts: Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes* has been designed to provide students with opportunities to develop transferable learning skills. These learning skills are grouped into three sets:

- **Foundation Skills** – basic skills for the study of industrial arts
- **Personal Skills** – basic skills for personal effectiveness and growth
- **Production Skills** – basic skills for production and fabrication

The curriculum framework is designed to support and broaden the focus of industrial arts. The general learning outcomes are interrelated and interdependent, and each outcome can be achieved through a variety of learning strategies and experiences. It is intended to be used by teachers to strengthen and revitalize programming.

All students need to develop essential skills for the 21st century. Students who engage in the industrial arts work independently and collaboratively as they develop and apply decision-making, problem-solving, and critical-thinking skills to practical problems and/or issues. They also develop skills, such as inferring, synthesizing, analyzing, and evaluating, as well as a complete range of communication skills including listening/speaking, reading/writing, and viewing/representing.

Participants in industrial arts programming work actively in a hands-on environment with technological tools, materials, and processes to transform concepts and ideas into goods and services. Problems, ideas, and concepts are explored from the research/investigation stage to the product construction stage, and ultimately to final testing and assessment/evaluation of the goods produced. These learning environments offer challenging, stimulating, and enjoyable activities that motivate students to learn.

For more information, visit the Industrial Arts website at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/teched/ia_framework/index.html>, or contact

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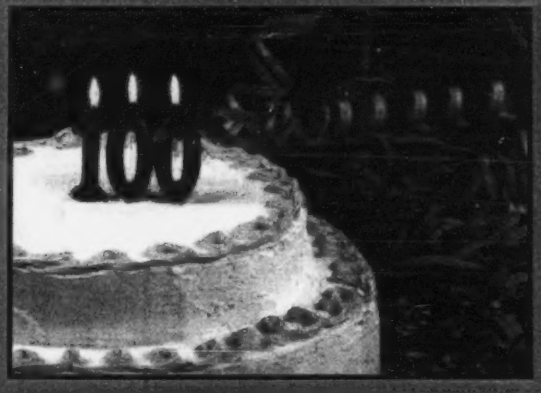

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Have you ever been on a teacher exchange? Do you know someone who has? Do you know any exchange teachers who are currently visiting from overseas? If so, please contact Marj Hutlet at <mhutlet@mts.net> or call 204-256-1037 and leave a message. She will provide you with complete details of this upcoming event.

About the Aboriginal Education Directorate

By Sheila Redsky

The Aboriginal Education Directorate (AED) is a shared services branch that operates within two departments: Manitoba Education and Manitoba Advanced Education and Literacy. AED works closely with Minister Eric Robinson and Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, and ensures that departments provide an integrated approach to Aboriginal education and training.

AED's mandate is to ensure that Manitoba's education and training systems are responsive to the needs of Aboriginal peoples. This mandate is accomplished through consultation with many groups and individuals, such as school administrators, educators, students, parents, Aboriginal and community organizations, and other government departments.

AED promotes the removal of systemic barriers to Aboriginal student success in education and training, and collaborates across government departments on issues related to Aboriginal education and training.

In partnership with schools/school divisions, AED collects survey data on students and teachers through the *Aboriginal Identity Declaration* and the *Aboriginal Teachers Questionnaire*. It coordinates the implementation of the Aboriginal Education Action Plan and its renewal, and promotes and participates in Aboriginal-focused research activities and planning, such as the annual Aboriginal Education Research Forum.

AED collaborates with parents, families, school divisions and schools, and communities in initiatives such as Building Student Success with Aboriginal Parents and the Community Schools Partnership Initiative.

AED has also developed a training kit on Aboriginal peoples called *A Journey from Cultural Awareness to Cultural Competency*, which includes a four-day training program that was developed with consultations and focus groups with Aboriginal organizations and other stakeholders. School divisions, in partnership with First Nations, are coordinating teams to participate in the training sessions.

Other Aboriginal education initiatives within Manitoba Education include the following:

- implementation of the Aboriginal Academic Achievement Grant
- integration of Aboriginal perspectives into core curricula – social studies, science, ELA, math, and the arts
- development of new curricula/courses with a focus on Aboriginal content/perspectives (e.g., *Kindergarten to Grade 12 Aboriginal Languages and Cultures: Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes*, a Grade 12 Aboriginal Studies course, and teacher resources on Residential Schools and Treaty education)
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Faculties of Education are now mandated to implement a required pre-service course on Aboriginal perspectives for teachers in training. Manitoba students require a three-credit-hour course on Aboriginal perspectives to complete the teacher pre-service program. This will help to enhance teachers' confidence and capacities to include Aboriginal perspectives in the curriculum.

In 2008, the AED released the Aboriginal Educators' Poster Series. Each of the four posters highlights educators in various roles and provides a message for youth about considering education as a career choice. This provides students with culturally relevant role models reflecting the diversity of Aboriginal people in Manitoba.

Due to the overwhelming response to the poster project from educators, the AED developed *Profiles of Aboriginal Educators: Footprints for the Future*. This resource captures the personal stories of various educators in the province of Manitoba, documenting where they are from, their identity, how they entered the field of education, the roles of their current positions, and their words of encouragement to youth. Teacher mentorship plays an integral role in promoting teaching as a viable profession for Aboriginal youth. The document has the potential to be utilized for other educational purposes. However, it was created as a resource to mentor students while they consider their career options.

Profiles of Aboriginal Educators illuminates the various careers available to students in education and highlights many Aboriginal role models. Some of these stories shared by the role models are a testament, revealing challenging life situations on their educational journey. Most importantly, all stories offer a message of encouragement and a road map of possibilities that will inspire youth.

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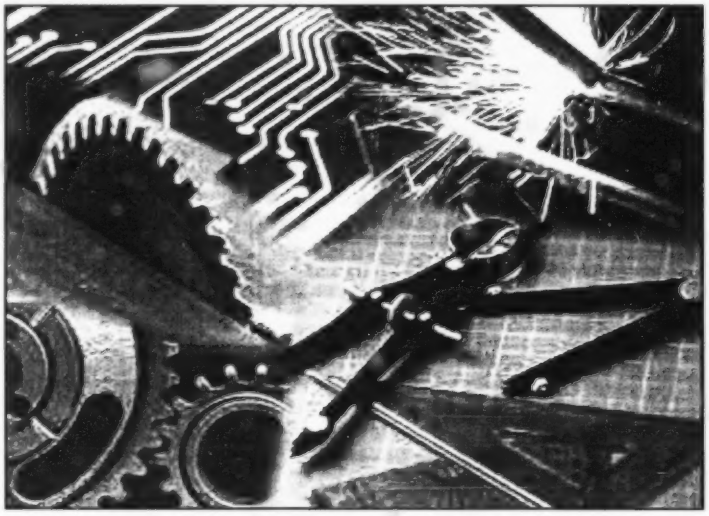

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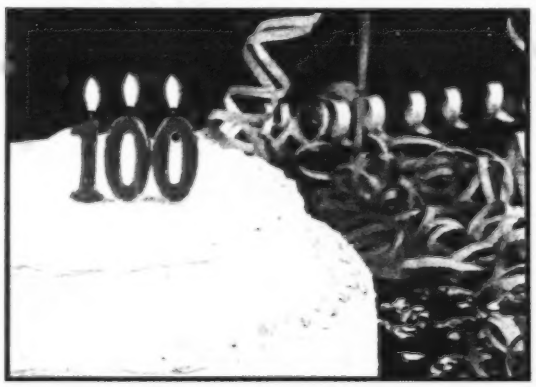

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Connecting the Sciences to Human Health and Well-Being

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New developments in science are often front-page news. In particular, discoveries and innovations in the health sciences are widely reported because they can have a significant impact on our lives.

Students are better able to see the value in what they are learning when teachers emphasize connections like those between science and personal wellness. Students are motivated when they can see that their learning in the classroom is relevant in the real world.

Manitoba Education welcomes partnerships with external agencies that share its goal of providing students and teachers with timely, relevant, and appropriate supports. Through such partnerships, two new resources have been developed that help demonstrate to students the importance of science in the advancement of human health and well-being.

A partnership with the Manitoba Division of the Canadian Cancer Society resulted in the development of *Health and Physics: A Manitoba Grade 12 Resource for Health and Radiation Physics*. This document was developed with the recognition that many of us will at some time undergo a diagnostic procedure that involves a form of radiation (e.g., MRI, X-ray). Its writer, Tanis Thiessen of Prairie Rose School Division, contextualized the science in a storyline involving an individual's journey into the healthcare system, thereby outlining in an accessible way radiation physics and its many applications in diagnostic imaging and therapeutic treatments.

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By making students aware of the remarkable progress being made in research and practice related to organ transplantation, they are more likely to appreciate the connections between the science they experience in school and its applications to human health. Both resources help students and teachers make direct connections between the school science they experience in class and the new technologies and associated issues that arise from advancements in the medical and physical sciences.

Inquiries related to these learning resources may be directed to

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Email: john.murray@gov.mb.ca

A Book is a Book by Any Other Name

By Ani Granson and David Watson

Supporting an inclusive classroom means providing alternate formats for students who cannot hold a book or read its printed pages.

Media Production Services (MPS) of the Educational Resources Branch supports the education of Manitoba students who are print disabled by producing books in alternate formats, such as Braille, large print, audio books, and electronic text, and by providing them free of charge.

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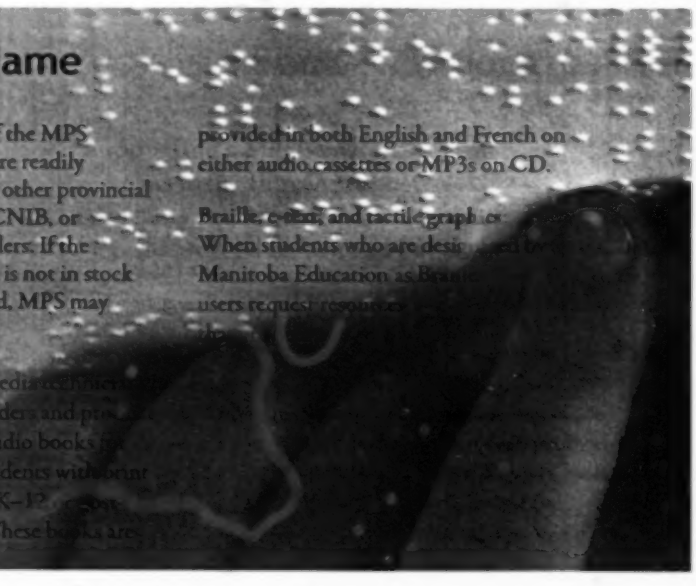

Distance Learning: Meeting Student Graduation Requirements

By Susan Wersch

Distance learning expands students' options. It allows them to take compulsory or optional courses in print, audio conference, or online format, giving them a flexible alternative to the rigid timelines and limited subject offerings in the traditional classroom.

For students who are able to work in a self-directed environment, distance learning can offer many useful advantages. The Distance Learning Unit offers services that provide opportunities for Grades 9 to 12 learners and professional learning resources and support to educators and school/division administration. These are delivered in the following three formats:

Independent Study Option (ISO) is print-based and provides students with support by email or phone. A new support document called *Guidelines for ISO School Facilitators* provides suggestions to support students enrolled in ISO courses. Simplified student registration and reference order forms are available on the Distance Learning website. Teachers also use ISO courses as additional resources in their classrooms.

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New courses for Grades 9 and 10 Physical Education/Health Education are available from the ISO. Students can register in the courses for $135, and teacher reference courses are available for $63 (including GST). Previews of both courses are posted on the ISO website. Grades 9 to 12 Physical Education/Health Education WBCs are available at no charge. Course and training requests are done electronically at <www.edu.gov.mb.cca/k12/dl/wbc/index.html>.

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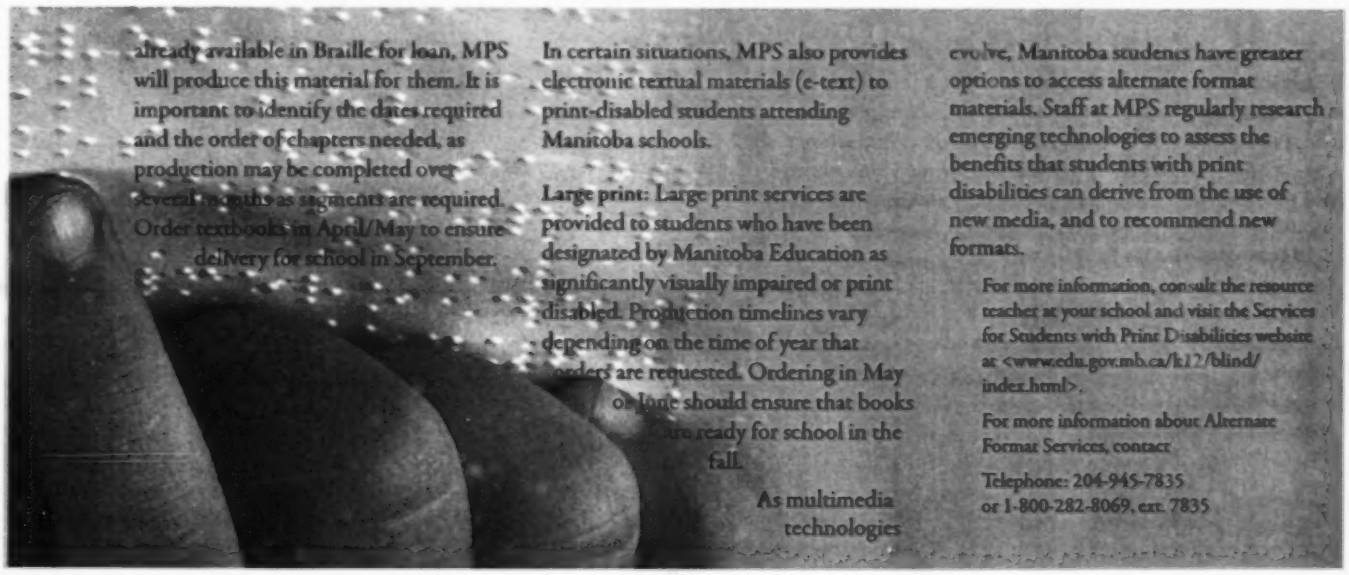

already available in Braille for loan, MPS will produce this material for them. It is important to identify the dates required and the order of chapters needed, as production may be completed over several months as segments are required. Order textbooks in April/May to ensure delivery for school in September.

In certain situations, MPS also provides electronic textual materials (e-text) to print-disabled students attending Manitoba schools.

Large print: Large print services are provided to students who have been designated by Manitoba Education as significantly visually impaired or print disabled. Production timelines vary depending on the time of year that orders are requested. Ordering in May or June should ensure that books are ready for school in the fall.

As multimedia technologies evolve, Manitoba students have greater options to access alternate format materials. Staff at MPS regularly research emerging technologies to assess the benefits that students with print disabilities can derive from the use of new media, and to recommend new formats.

For more information, consult the resource teacher at your school and visit the Services for Students with Print Disabilities website at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/blind/index.html>.

For more information about Alternate Format Services, contact

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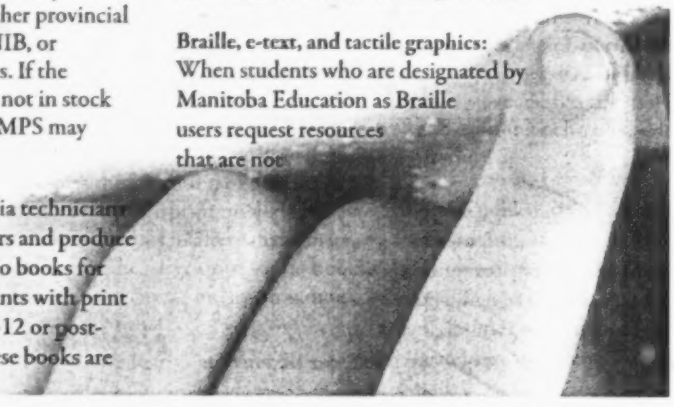

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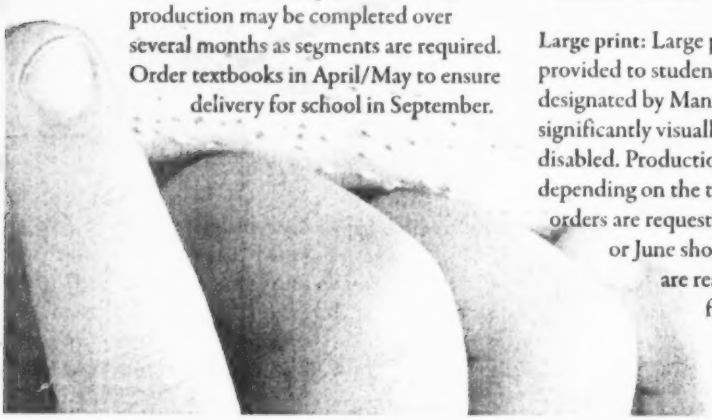
For more information about distance learning in Manitoba, please contact

Distance Learning Unit
Telephone: 204-325-1700
or 1-800-465-9915
Email: distance.learning@gov.mb.ca



already available in Braille for loan, MPS will produce this material for them. It is important to identify the dates required and the order of chapters needed, as production may be completed over several months as segments are required. Order textbooks in April/May to ensure delivery for school in September.

In certain situations, MPS also provides electronic textual materials (e-text) to print-disabled students attending Manitoba schools.

Large print: Large print services are provided to students who have been designated by Manitoba Education as significantly visually impaired or print disabled. Production timelines vary depending on the time of year that orders are requested. Ordering in May or June should ensure that books are ready for school in the fall.

As multimedia technologies evolve, Manitoba students have greater options to access alternate format materials. Staff at MPS regularly research emerging technologies to assess the benefits that students with print disabilities can derive from the use of new media, and to recommend new formats.

For more information, consult the resource teacher at your school and visit the Services for Students with Print Disabilities website at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/blind/index.html>.

For more information about Alternate Format Services, contact

Telephone: 204-945-7835
or 1-800-282-8069, ext. 7835

Engaging Students in Deep Thinking and Learning

By Shelley Warkentin

Student learning is particularly effective when it takes place within complex, rich, meaningful, and interactive experiences. These are situations where students are deeply engaged in questioning, exploring, discovering, and uncovering understandings in order to make meaning of themselves and their world. The scenarios depicted on the right illustrate two instances of such learning.

As soon as students walk into the classroom, they begin activating and nurturing the mental processes associated with deep thinking. It does not begin only after the "basics" have been mastered, and it is definitely not reserved for just a minority of students. Rather, thinking processes can be nurtured in everyone and must permeate our students' lives and learning across the curriculum.

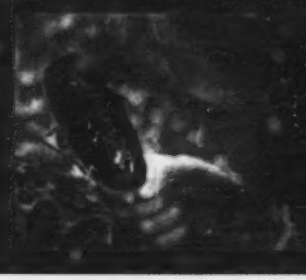
From the moment children are born, they search for ways to satisfy their curiosity and need for discovery and challenge. As they move into schools, children are blessed with the gift of time and community to grow that desire for knowledge and understanding within environments that honour risk-taking, divergent thinking, speculation, questioning, and experimentation. Foundational to this, though, is our collective belief that all children can learn and achieve.

What does this mean for curriculum, classrooms, and educators? As a result of our knowledge-driven society and the advent of the digital age and the "drive-through" information age, schools and developers of curriculum have felt pressure to cover the enormous landscape of subject matter. Students need to be able to think critically, creatively, and ethically in order to navigate within "glocal" realities (that is, within the nexus of the "local" and "global" worlds), where change is constant and resources are dynamic and of variable quality and reliability.

All partners in education are encouraged to begin with the belief that children have a natural motivation to learn and a desire to entertain complex ideas, and that this rich thinking and learning needs to unfold within larger, multi-layered, complex learning contexts. Educators also need to consciously plan for supporting deep thinking for all learners within their learning communities, where learning and knowledge construction become a social act. These social contexts become opportunities for modelling, scaffolding through cooperation, and engaging in ongoing dialogue about and reflection on the processes for thinking deeply. They may also become contexts in which students' positive attitudes and values related to deep thinking emerge and their identities as inquirers are further developed. Learning communities also need to be consciously built and sustained, where all members exhibit cognizant and compassionate behaviour toward others and value differences. Diversity is then embraced as an asset to extending individual thinking and the goal of developing reflective and engaged citizens becomes possible.

Wendell Berry suggests that "our knowledge of the world instructs us first of all that the world is greater than our knowledge of it. To those who rejoice in abundance and intricacy, this is a source of joy." As Manitoba educators rethink, reinvent, and journey through ideas about curriculum, teaching, and learning, our students will embrace the idea that school is an intellectually stimulating and enjoyable environment. In fostering deep thinking in our students, they will inevitably become confident and empowered lifelong learners.

Under the warm May sun, along the shoreline of the local creek, a class of Grades 3 and 4 students are collecting water samples, measuring water temperatures, taking digital images of plant life, capturing video of the goings-on of nesting birds, taking field notes, intently discussing observations, and offering new questions.
This marks their fifth visit to the creek to carry on the inquiry launched by their fourth grade predecessors three years ago—that is, to find out what is happening to the health of the creek and what they can do to make it healthier for its plants and animals. Students have embraced and extended this longitudinal study by publishing their class online journal, which includes their documented field notes and observations, their analysis and reflections, along with an array of photos, videos, and artwork. Excitement has been brewing with the news that they will now be collaborating with classrooms from across the globe.



The Grade 11 English Language Arts classroom is filled with the buzz of rich conversation and reflection. Some groups are engaged in heated discussions, others are quietly pondering and jotting down their thinking, while still others are searching intently for perspectives within the variety of fiction and non-fiction texts they have been exploring, hoping to gain some interesting insights from the blog that they have started, and searching within themselves and their experiences for "unknown" answers. The probing question: What is true love?

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Preparing for and Supporting Education for Sustainable Living

By Gary Babiuk and Thomas Falkenberg

Education can play a central role in causing shifts in awareness and in everyday practices regarding issues of environmental damage and over-consumption of non-renewable and renewable resources.

Throughout Canada, education for sustainable development (ESD) has become an important focus, but there is a need for research into the levels of preparedness of and support for Manitoba teachers for ESD, and how these levels could be improved. To address this need, we have initiated the research project "Sustainable Development and Living through Changing Teacher Education and Teaching in Manitoba." This project is a collaboration among university and teacher researchers. It investigates ways in which school divisions, schools, classrooms, and teacher education programs in Manitoba are addressing, and could better address, teaching for sustainable living.

More recently, the concept of sustainability has been broadened from a focus on environmental matters to include other essential aspects of human living. Adopting this more holistic and systems-theoretical view, the research project focuses its concern for sustainable living not just on the environmental aspects, but also on the health and well-being, socio-economic, and socio-cultural aspects, of human living.

Within this concept of education for sustainable living, the purpose of this project is

- to identify the attitudes, competencies, and understandings teachers need to prepare students in Manitoba schools for sustainable living
- to identify ways in which the development of these attitudes, competencies, and understandings can be supported in teacher education programs and through professional development opportunities
- to assess how existing teacher education programs and professional development opportunities in Manitoba affect student teachers' and teachers' development of those attitudes, competencies, and understandings
- to identify policy requirements at the school, division, and ministry level to support education for sustainable living

This project includes a cluster of eight research sub-projects involving a total of 33 research collaborators. The sub-projects focus on a school/community garden, an ESD school division student conference, a school-based sociocultural event, cultural diversity teacher training, rural environmental curriculum development, and sociocultural and diversity programs in teacher education programs. Co-researchers include teachers, school-based administrators, and university teacher educators. These projects will provide eight case studies that will complement and add to the overall baseline project conducted by a team of researchers led by the principal investigators.

All participants in this research project will not only conduct their own collaborative action research but will contribute to the overall understanding of the need for sustainability in education for sustainable development and living. The research project is jointly funded by the Canadian Council on Learning (www.ccl-cca.ca) and Manitoba Education.

For more information on this research project, please contact

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profile

Thomas Falkenberg is an assistant professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba. Beginning with his doctoral thesis work in education, his research interest has been in the areas of teacher education and teacher development. Since coming to the University of Manitoba four years ago, he has been actively supporting and creating opportunities for pan-Canadian collaboration in teacher education practice and research. Falkenberg is currently the president of the Canadian Association for Teacher Education (www.csse.ca/cate) and a co-organizer of the Series of Working Conferences on Research in Teacher Education in Canada (www.umanitoba.ca/education/TEResearch).

Gary Babiuk is an assistant professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba. After 23 years of teaching and school administration in a number of public schools in Alberta, he completed his doctoral work in 2000, which focused on holistic, transformational, and global education. Since then, Babiuk's research has been directed toward the need to make transformational changes in our education system at all levels to adopt a more progressive focus, and to make direct connections between education for sustainability and the solutions needed to address issues involving environmental threats, socioeconomic disparity, cultural tensions, and non-healthy living. He is currently the co-facilitator of the Holistic Learning and Spirituality in Education Network of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).

"A Chance at Their Chance"—Intensive Newcomer Support

By Diana Turner

Each year, several hundred students from refugee backgrounds begin school in Manitoba. Most of them will have experienced some disruption in their education.

According to the Department of Labour and Immigration, in 2008, over 100 youth from ages 10–19 arrived in Manitoba with no formal schooling. Many students also struggle with trauma, loneliness, poverty, and the need to function as adults.

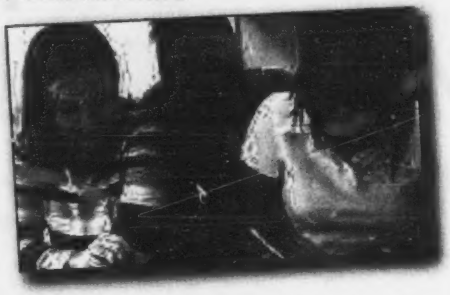
A very short window of time exists to provide these older "literacy, academics, and language" (LAL) students with the boost they need to catch up with their peers. They experience frustration and hopelessness when placed in regular age-appropriate classes that are clearly beyond their grasp. Research across North America indicates a dropout rate of over 90% for immigrant youth who begin their high school years lacking basic education.

> *"... no one ever comes to our beautiful country thinking, 'I'm going to have a rotten life in Canada.' People come with hopes and dreams of what this wonderful land will mean to them and to their future, especially the future of the children. However, without opportunities to receive formal instruction which recognizes the fact that school experiences haven't been consistent, forward movement in terms of language acquisition and growth of academic knowledge becomes bleak." –Helen Christie, INS teacher, River East Transcona School Division*

Through Manitoba Education's Intensive Newcomer Support (INS) grant, a number of school divisions are trying to provide LAL students with the intensive academic and social supports they need to reach their goals. These programs vary with the size and resources of the division, but they are showing similar positive results by developing successful, resilient learners.

> *"Once the registration paperwork was finished, huge smiles could be seen. The cousin then told me he [the student] would now 'go home and dance in the living room, because he's so happy he can be in school.'" –Helen Christie, INS teacher, River East Transcona School Division*

INS programs, which often cluster students for part of the day in a smaller classroom setting, allow for relationship-building and individualized instruction. They also ease students into regular school programming and introduce them to Canadian culture.



Gains of two to three years in reading levels have been reported and teachers report attendance rates of above 90%. According to Sandra Melo, INS teacher with St. James School Division, "If they are sick, we have to send them home because they simply won't miss a day."

> *"The Intensive Newcomer Support Program in Louis Riel School Division remains a critical component of our overall strategy to address newcomer learning needs. It has demonstrated success in respect to both student learning and to our organizational learning regarding effective programming for refugee newcomer youth. We continue to learn from the program, and to adjust and adapt in response to these discoveries." –Tim MacKay, Principal of René Deleurme Centre, Louis Riel School Division*

Guidelines for applying for an Intensive Newcomer Support grant are available at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/ins_grant/index.html>.

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A similar document has been developed by the Bureau de l'éducation française Division for the Français and the French Immersion Programs.

Contact Information:

We invite contributions to *Education Manitoba*. When forwarding submissions, please include your name and telephone number, and send materials in print and electronic formats to:

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We also want to hear what you think about our newsletter. Please send your comments, ideas, and suggestions to the address specified above.

Manitoba